



Executive Summary

MinnCAN public opinion survey on teacher and principal staffing

Minnesota is one of a handful of states that requires decisions about who to hire, promote or even lay off in public schools to be made solely based on years on the job. This survey shows that voters overwhelmingly want performance, not seniority, to drive public school staffing decisions.

Researchers conducted the survey in December 2011. Respondents included registered voters in Minnesota and the total sample size was 1,000, stratified by age and gender to correspond with state population estimates. Major findings include:

MINNESOTANS AGREE ON HOW TO MEASURE TEACHER PERFORMANCE

- 80 percent think student test scores are somewhat or very important when evaluating teacher performance.
- 97 percent of respondents consider student learning progress—as measured by a combination of knowledge, study skills, grades and test scores—important in determining a teacher’s performance.
- 84 percent think evaluations of the teacher conducted by the principal are somewhat or very important when evaluating teacher performance.

MINNESOTANS WANT TO MAKE TEACHER LAYOFFS BASED ON PERFORMANCE

- 96 percent believe that student learning progress should be an important factor in determining which teachers to lay off first.
- 92 percent agree that school officials should have more flexibility and authority to remove poor performing teachers.
- 91 percent believe that the primary factor in determining teacher layoffs should be performance.

MINNESOTANS AGREE ON HOW TO MEASURE PRINCIPAL PERFORMANCE

- 92 percent think that student learning progress should be an important factor in evaluating the performance of a school principal.
- 96 percent say that the effectiveness and performance of teachers is an important way to determine a principal’s job performance.
- 72 percent say student test scores are an important way to determine a principal’s job performance.

MINNESOTANS WANT TO COMPENSATE TEACHERS BASED ON PERFORMANCE

- 95 percent of respondents think that student learning progress should be important in determining teachers’ salaries.
- The most important factor in determining a public school teacher’s salary is student learning progress, selected by 63 percent of respondents from a handful of options.
- 79 percent believe that principal evaluations are somewhat or very important in determining teachers’ salaries.